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CARDIN CALLS THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET A GOOD STARTING POINT FOR RESTORING OUR NATION'S ECONOMIC HEALTH

Expresses Concerns about Cuts that Impact Our Most Vulnerable

Washington, DC – **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD)**, a member of the Senate Budget and Finance committees, called President Obama's FY12 Budget proposal a thoughtful step toward addressing our federal deficit while still investing in programs that will help boost our economy and lead to greater job creation.

"President Obama has given us a credible blueprint for dealing with our deficit while still investing in America and moving us forward to a bigger and brighter future. Like many American families still facing tough times, the President is asking that the federal government live within its means. This is the right thing to do at such a fragile time in our recovery and it will require that we make some tough choices.

"We must be smart about where we invest and where we make cuts. I applaud the President for not making indiscriminate, across-the-board cuts with his FY12 Budget. The President calls for major investments in public transportation, including \$150 million for Washington's Metro system. He also calls for a record \$67 million for the Chesapeake Bay Program and protects middle-class families from the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) for another three years. I support his proposed increases to K-12 education and the National Institutes of Health, both of which help boost our economy now and into the future. However, I strongly oppose his proposals to cut funding for low-income energy assistance programs (LIHEAP) and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), and freeze resources for prenatal programs for at-risk women. These are important examples of programs that pay positive dividends for some of our most vulnerable citizens in Maryland and nationwide and they should be protected. I also question the President's proposals to cut back funding for the Small Business Administration and water infrastructure programs at a time when we need to be investing in our most effective job-creating programs.

"Tough choices inherently are not easy, but the President's FY12 Budget proposal gives us a starting point from which we can make significant progress restoring America's fiscal health while getting us back on a path to balance our budget."

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